

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The supporting device as claimed in claim 13‡, wherein the head support section and the back support section are separate structural parts which ~~are~~ can be fitted to each other ~~for the supporting position, forming the open areas.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The supporting device as claimed in claim 13‡, wherein the outwardly opening ~~open~~ areas are formed by laterally open recesses of the back support section.

4. (Withdrawn) The supporting device as claimed in claim 3, wherein the recesses can be closed by detachably or movably arranged cover elements.

5. (Currently Amended) The supporting device as claimed in claim 13‡, wherein the back support section and the head support section are integrated in a rigid support unit.

6. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) The supporting device as claimed in claim 5, wherein the rigid support unit is arranged to be movable between ~~an in particular a~~ vertical rest position and ~~an in particular a~~ horizontal supporting position.

7. (Withdrawn) The supporting device as claimed in claim 6, wherein the head support section and the back support

section are mounted relative to one another so as to be able to be moved between the rest position and the supporting position by guide means.

8. (Currently Amended) A home or workplace furniture item or leisure item, wherein a supporting device as claimed in Claim 131 is provided.

9. (Withdrawn) The home or workplace furniture item or leisure item as claimed in claim 8, configured as a seat and/or couch.

10. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) An add-on unit with a head support section and a spacer part and with at least one connection element for securing the add-on unit to a surface part, the spacer part being configured as a support surface for a spinal column area, and the securing being done such that the surface part as back support section serves for the overall creation of a supporting device as claimed in Claim 131.

11. (Previously Presented) A supporting device for a person's back and head area, with a back support section and with a head support section, wherein a partial area of the back support section has, at the level of shoulder blade areas of the back area, a support surface in a spinal column area and, on both sides of the support surface, open areas which are configured in such a way that the shoulder blade areas can move downward past the support surface, the open areas each having an upper edge adjacent the head support section and a lower edge adjacent the back support section, the lower edge being substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal centerline of the back support section.

12. (Previously Presented) The supporting device as claimed in claim 11, wherein the support surface in the spinal column area is sufficiently narrow to support only the spinal column and the shoulder blade areas can move downward past the support surface without interference.

13. (New) A longitudinally elongate supporting device for a person's back and head area, said device comprising:

a head support section;

a back support section, said back support section defining a first support surface disposed at the level of shoulder blade areas of a person, and a second support surface, said first support surface being disposed between said head support section and said second support surface, said first and second support surfaces each having a width dimension defined transversely relative to a longitudinal extent of said supporting device and said second support surface having a longitudinal dimension defined parallel to the longitudinal extent of said supporting device, said width dimension of said first support surface being significantly less than said width dimension of said second support surface to define a pair of outwardly opening areas on opposite sides of said back support section for receiving respective shoulder blades of the person such that said first support surface disposed between said outwardly opening areas supports a spinal column region of the person and said width dimension of said first support surface is sufficiently narrow to permit respective shoulder blade areas of the person to move downwardly below said first support surface without interference, said longitudinal and said width dimensions of said search support surface being sufficient for fully supporting the person's thoracic region.

14. (New) The device according to claim 13, wherein said outwardly opening areas each have a width dimension and a length dimension, each said width dimension of said outwardly opening areas extending outwardly from a longitudinal edge of said first support surface to an outer extent in line with an outer longitudinal edge of said second support surface, each said length dimension of said outwardly opening areas being defined longitudinally between said head support section and said second support surface, said width dimension of each said outwardly opening area being greater than said length dimension of said area.

15. (New) The device according to claim 13, wherein a width dimension of each said outwardly opening area is greater than said width dimension of the first support surface.

16. (New) The device according to claim 13, wherein said width dimension of said first support surface is less than one third of said width dimension of said second support surface.

17. (New) The device according to claim 13, wherein said first support surface solely supports the spinal column region of the person.